

### THE WAHHABI RAIDS

It is unquestionably fortunate, the "Near East and India" states, that the recognised raiding season in Arabia is nearing its end, for the reports concerning Wahhabi activities near the borders of Iraq and of Kuwait, whether they be wholly or only in part accurate, denote a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. The Mutair, under Shaikh Faisal al Dawish, have in the last few weeks come to know what sort of weapon of defence and offence the R.A.F. is, but whether this knowledge is sufficient to dissuade them from further designs upon the "infidels" of Iraq and Kuwait is not yet proved. Nor is that all. For fears are entertained—they were publicly expressed at the beginning of these activities of Faisal al Dawish—that the large tribes of the Ajman and the Ataibah, under Shaikh Ibn Hathlain and Shaikh Ibn Hamid, who may or may not relish subordination to King Ibn Saoud, are inclined to follow the example of the Mutair. If these three tribes were to unite in an attempt to create disorder in Iraq and Kuwait, the effects upon the loyalty of certain other tribes both in Iraq and in other parts of Arabia might be disastrous. Quite obviously the British, who are convinced that the Wahhabis have no case against Iraq and Kuwait to justify the recent raids, are taking no chances, and the cooperation of the Navy with the Royal Air Force should ensure the circumscribing of the activities of the discontented Wahhabis. But what one most wishes to see is tangible proof that King Ibn Saoud's word is still law among the Ajman, the Ataibah and the Mutair, for if the tribes, for whatever reason, have in act rebelled or are ready to rebel against their sovereign overlord, the hopes which are reposed by every well-wisher of the Wahhabis in some kind of Arab renaissance may have to be modified or postponed.

#### The "Ikhwan" and Their King

It has been widely suggested that these raids and threats of further raids have been prompted by religious fanatics who, in view of the statesmanship and farsightedness with which King Ibn Saoud finds a *modus vivendi* with the West and is willing to take from it that, and more, which is useful to his essentially Islamic purposes, have persuaded themselves that the true Wahhabi faith has become forgotten by the great Wahhabi leader. This, however, is a plausible and convenient explanation which would seem to require very much more evidence than is available to sustain its accuracy. If it is true that the Ataibah and the Ajman are looking askance at the authority of the King of the Hejaz and Najd—we are in no position to confirm the report—the explanation is far more likely to be found in the past attitude of these tribes towards the Saoud family than in any religious argument. For the present the whole matter must be one of surmise, and observers should be chary of assuming that the *Ikhwan* movement, or part of it, is irreconcilably opposed to its leader. On the other hand, it is possible that tribes like the Ajman and the Ataibah in Najd, or the Harb in the Hejaz may consider the present a fit time to attempt to pay off old scores or in some measure to reassert the chaotic privileges which they claimed in past years. The separatist tendency of Arab tribes is, of course, a factor which cannot be again said; but, as we have stated, considerably more evidence is necessary before one is justified in assuming—what indeed would be a calamity for Arabia—that King Ibn Saoud's authority is seriously on the decline among his *Ikhwan*.

### MANY JEWISH PASSOVER VISITORS TO PALESTINE

The s.s. "Mauretania" brought some 200 visitors to Palestine last week, the majority of whom pro-

to Palestine last week, the majority of whom propose to remain in the country over the Passover. They are spending the intervening period touring the country. The notable visitors include Dr. Kollenscher of Berlin, Mr. Samuel Halperin of Poland, Mr. Nathan Halpern and Mr. S. H. Kugal of Brooklyn, Mr. Max Sichel, Chemnitz, Prof. Theodor Landau of Berlin, Colonel Sacerdotti of Turin, and Dr. Max Rosenthal of New York.

The Zionist Information Bureau is in receipt of many enquiries regarding tours for prospective visitors from all parts.